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My name is Matt Trujillo. I am a sophomore political science student at the University of Connecticut from Somers, New York. I am writing to urge the Committee to reject Governor Malloy's budget proposal. While Connecticut undoubtedly faces immense challenges with its current budget deficit, a cut to higher education is not a good solution for students or citizens. A 31.2 million dollar cut to UConn funding will be detrimental to the State and the University.

I chose UConn over the ten other schools that I was admitted to for a variety of reasons. The atmosphere on campus and the energy of the student body impressed me. My parents liked the academic rigor and strong programs that are offered here. UConn seemed like a great choice for me, and I want to be able to say that it still is. With steadily increasing tuition and broad cuts to important and popular programs, I fear that many of the positives that led me to commit to UConn will not be as apparent to high school seniors making their college decisions in the next few years.

Out of state students like me are already paying excessive tuition rates to attend this University. A friend of mine from my hometown was not able to return this semester because of the high cost of going here as an out of state student. Similarly, as their tuition increases, in state students are having a harder time affording this university, which has typically been seen as an affordable option for Connecticut students. UConn should be accessible to students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. Raising the barrier to entry of attending this university will seriously limit the diversity of our student body, which is something that we pride ourselves on here at UConn.

It will certainly be a challenge to close the budget deficit that Connecticut currently faces. Any effective solution to a serious issue requires sacrifices to be made. However, a drastic cut to higher education is not an effective long-term solution for the state. UConn President Susan Herbst has said that a cut of this magnitude "is not sustainable if we wish to maintain our quality." For this reason, I strongly urge you, members of the Appropriations Committee, to reject Governor Malloy's state budget proposal for 2016.